

Message Text

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61
ACTION EB-07

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: EGEN, EEC, DA
SUBJECT: SPECULATION ABOUT GUNDELACH

REF: COPENHAGEN 0461

1. THERE HAS BEEN A RECENT FLURRY OF SPECULATION IN THE
DANISH PRESS OVER GUNDELACH'S PROSPECTS IN THE EC
COMMISSION. ONE FRONT PAGE ARTICLE GUESSES THAT SOAMES
WILL LEAVE AT THE END OF THE YEAR AND ASSERTS THAT
GUNDELACH IS THE FAVORITE TO REPLACE HIM AS COMMISSIONER
FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS. THE BRUSSELS CORRESPONDENT OF
ANOTHER PAPER SEES GUNDELACH RISING TO THE JOB OF
COMMISSION PRESIDENT, FOR WHICH HE IS DESCRIBED AS
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THE LEADING CANDIDATE.

2. THE SPECULATION ABOUT GUNDELACH IN THE TOP SPOT RUNS AS FOLLOWS. WHEN THE THREE NEWEST MEMBERS ENTERED THE COMMON MARKET, IT WAS AGREED THAT A UK APPOINTEE WOULD SUCCEED TO THE PRESIDENCY AFTER ORTOLI. THE UK LABOR GOVERNMENT, HOWEVER, IS UNWILLING TO NAME SOAMES, A CONSERVATIVE, BUT HAS NO SUITABLE CANDIDATE OF ITS OWN. IRELAND'S CANDIDATE IS NOT LIKELY TO BE ACCEPTABLE, WHICH LEAVES DENMARK AND GUNDELACH WITH A GOOD CHANCE TO FILL THE JOB. GUNDELACH, ACCORDING TO THE ARTICLE, "IS CONSIDERED ONE OF THE BEST BRAINS OF THE COMMISSION, AND THE BRITISH PRESS CONSIDERS HIM ONE OF THE COMMISSION'S STARS." THE ONLY FACTOR SEEN TO BE WORKING AGAINST GUNDELACH IS HIS BACKGROUND AS A CIVIL SERVANT, INASMUCH AS "MEMBER STATES PREFER A POLITICIAN".

3. COMMENT: DANISH OFFICIALS DEALING WITH THE EC SEE LITTLE POSSIBILITY THAT GUNDELACH WILL SUCCEED ORTOLI. THEY CHARACTERIZE THE PRESS REPORTS AS MERE SPECULATION. ON THE OTHER HAND, THEY DO NOT ENTIRELY DISCOUNT THE POSSIBILITY THAT HE MIGHT SUCCEED SOAMES. THEY NOTE THAT GUNDELACH WILL BE ONE OF THE COMMISSIONERS WHO REMAINS WHEN THE COMMISSION'S COMPOSITION CHANGES AT THE END OF THE YEAR. THIS CONTINUITY PLUS HIS RECOGNIZED ABILITY WILL, THEY THINK, PUT HIM IN LINE FOR THE JOB.

DEAN

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